

TARA KATUK MAC LEAN SWEENEY
ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR INDIAN AFFAIRS
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR



Tara Katuk Mac Lean Sweeney was confirmed by the United States Senate as the 13th Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs for the U.S. Department of the Interior on June 28, 2018, and assumed official duties on July 30, 2018.

Ms. Sweeney is the first Alaska Native and the second woman to be confirmed for the position. She comes to the Department of the Interior after serving as Executive Vice President of External Affairs for the Arctic Slope Regional Corporation (ASRC).

Ms. Sweeney, from Utqiagvik, grew up in rural Alaska. She has spent her professional career working to empower Native organizations and communities through advocacy at all levels of government, with a strong focus on the Federal process. Ms. Sweeney also has served in leadership positions on numerous business and nonprofit boards at the State, national, and international levels, including (until recently) chair of the Arctic Economic Council, a trustee of the Ted Stevens Foundation, and co-chair of the Alaska Federation of Natives.

In 2008, the Alaska Journal of Commerce named her a “Top Forty Under 40” business leader. In 2014 and 2017, her team won two Emmy® Awards from the Northwest Chapter of the National Academy of Television Arts & Sciences for its IAM IñUPIAQ commercial campaign in 2014 and its 2017 long-format documentary titled, “True North, the Story of ASRC.” In 2017, she was inducted into the Anchorage ATHENA Society, a program of the Anchorage Chamber of Commerce that encourages the potential of women as valued members and leaders of the business community.

She earned her Bachelor of Science degree from Cornell University School of Industrial and Labor Relations. Ms. Sweeney is married with two children. Ms. Sweeney is a tribal member of the Native Village of Barrow Traditional Iñupiat Government and the Iñupiat Community of the Arctic Slope, both federally recognized tribes in Alaska. She is also a shareholder in the Arctic Slope Regional Corporation, the Alaska Native regional corporation established pursuant to the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act of 1971.

The Assistant Secretary is responsible for carrying out the Department of the Interior’s trust responsibilities regarding the management of tribal and individual Indian trust lands and assets and promoting the self-determination and economic self-sufficiency of the nation’s 573 federally recognized American Indian and Alaska Native tribes and their approximately two million enrolled members.